

A MEMORIAL

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS TO MAKE MOUNTAIN WEST CONFERENCE GAMES AVAILABLE ON BASIC CABLE TELEVISION AND SATELLITE TELEVISION AND REQUESTING THE APPROPRIATE INTERIM LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE IN THE EVENT THAT A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION IS NOT REACHED BY THE SPRING OF 2008.

WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico is a member of the Mountain West Conference; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain West Conference is on the brink of breaking into the bowl championship series, which is currently made up of the top six conferences in the nation, including the Big 10, PAC 10, Big 12, Big East, Southeastern and Atlantic Coast Conferences; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain West Conference has an exclusive long-term contract with a network established by CSTV Networks, Inc., and Comcast Cable, called "the mtn.", short for the "Mountain West Sports Network"; and

WHEREAS, the 2006 announcement of this deal stated that "CSTV will be added to Comcast's digital basic systems in Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico"; and

WHEREAS, the common understanding of "basic cable" is that all cable subscribers receive certain programs without extra charges or without being required to buy a premium package; and

WHEREAS, the Mountain West Sports Network is not part of basic cable service anywhere in New Mexico, is unavailable via satellite television providers such as DirectTV and DISH Network and is not even available as an extra cost option outside the larger municipalities in the state; and

WHEREAS, cable television companies are granted monopolies by local governments throughout the state, but they have not been required to offer the Mountain West Sports Network as part of basic cable service; and

WHEREAS, as government-endorsed cable television monopolies, these companies should be required to provide coverage of local news and sports programs as part of their basic service package, especially if these programs are made otherwise unavailable because of deals made by these same cable companies; and

WHEREAS, United States senators from New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming and Colorado have all expressed concern about the inability of cable and satellite companies to come to an agreement that will allow all subscribers in those states access to Mountain West Conference games;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that current efforts to have the Mountain West Sports Network made part of basic cable service and also for it to be offered on satellite television networks be supported; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if this problem is not resolved by the spring of 2008, the appropriate interim legislative committee be requested to investigate the problem and make recommendations for legislation to address the problem to the forty-ninth legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the chief executive officers of Comcast Cable and CSTV Networks, Inc., the commissioners of the Mountain West Conference, the president of the University of New Mexico and the New Mexico legislative council.